



## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS

The Monthly Electronic Newsletter of  
Homeland Security and Emergency Management  
N.H. Department of Safety, John J. Barthelmes, Commissioner  
33 Hazen Drive  
Concord, NH 03305  
1-800-852-3792  
[newsletters@dos.nh.gov](mailto:newsletters@dos.nh.gov)

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Members of the unified command staff meet during the Piscataqua River oil spill exercise on Oct. 3. The exercise took place at the Department of Environmental Services facility at Pease International Tradeport. See story, Page 2.

Photo courtesy of Diane Becker, HSEM

**EARTHQUAKE ROCKS NEW ENGLAND** – A magnitude 4.0 earthquake on Oct. 16 centered in Hollis, Maine, was felt all over New England, reaching as far as Vermont and Connecticut, but it caused no injuries or significant damage. The quake prompted hundreds of calls to 911, public safety dispatch centers and news organizations and led to the activation of the State Emergency Operations Center for several hours. HSEM staff contacted local emergency management directors and the state's Traffic Management Center to determine if any damage to infrastructure had occurred. No damage was reported. The quake struck at 7:12 p.m. and was initially measured as a magnitude 4.5 or 4.6. The U.S Geological Survey later reduced that to 4.0.

While there was little physical damage from the quake, the flood of more than 900 911 calls in the hour after the quake could have been problematic. People should only call 911 when they need emergency assistance.

**OIL SPILL EXERCISE HELD AT PEASE** – More than 100 emergency response personnel took part in an oil spill exercise, held at the Department of Environmental Resources' field office at Pease International Tradeport on Oct. 3, to deal with a major spill of diesel fuel into the Piscataqua River. The scenario projected the rupturing of a 560,000 gallon diesel tank owned by Irving Oil. A unified command structure was set up to coordinate response efforts by DES, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, the U.S. Coast Guard and Irving Oil. Personnel from HSEM other federal, state personnel and local agencies also supported the exercise. Response efforts included deploying boom to contain the spill and begin cleanup efforts.

**ACTIVE SHOOTER EXERCISE HELD AT MERRIMACK VALLEY HS** – The Central New Hampshire Special Operations Unit (CNHSOU) along with Concord Police and Fire Departments and Mutual Aid companies participated in a Full Scale Exercise on Saturday, Sept.29, at Merrimack Valley High School in Penacook. The scenario involved two active shooter/domestic terrorists in the school. The exercise objectives were: evaluate the capability to implement Incident Command System (ICS) in response to an active shooter incident and the effective transition to Unified Command; exercise the integration of CNHSOU by the City of Concord Police Department's ICS; and evaluate the capability of Concord Fire to provide triage and treatment in response to an active shooter incident. The exercise was funded by the Homeland Security Exercise Grant Program thru the N.H. Dept. of Safety.

**N.H. AED COMMISSION ACHIEVES MILESTONE** - The New Hampshire AED (automatic external defibrillator) Commission celebrated the placement of the devices in all but nine of the state's 600 public and private schools at a State House ceremony on Oct. 1. On hand for the most recent placements were: Heather Worthen, representing Croydon Village School; Lynn Olden representing Valley View Community Elementary, Farmington; Christine Blackstone representing the Paul A. Smith School, Franklin; Mary MacInnes, School Nurse, Seabrook Elementary School; Barbara Hopkins, Assistant Superintendent, SAU #21; Clay Odell, Chief, EMS Bureau, vice-chair AED Commission; Rep. Jennifer Coffey (R-Andover), Chair, NH AED Commission; Perry Plummer, Director, N.H. Division of Fire Standards & Training and Emergency Medical Services; Khristin Carroll, Parent Heart Watch, NH AED Commission. An announcement is expected soon that 100 percent of New Hampshire public schools have at least one AED on premises.

**DHHS PROVIDES VENTILATORS TO N.H. HOSPITALS** - The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is leading an effort to increase hospital ventilator capacity in New Hampshire. As part of this effort, 80 additional ventilators are being given to participating hospitals in New Hampshire and healthcare workers will receive training on how to use them. This is Phase II of a three-phase plan to roll out this equipment. The New Hampshire Critical Care and Supplemental Oxygen Program (CCSOP) is working to strengthen response to a catastrophic mass casualty event by deploying ventilators, the machines that breathe for someone who is in respiratory distress, to hospitals around the state and qualified EMS regions and providers. Training and exercises will be provided for medical personnel on how and when to deploy this equipment to help respond to a disaster, such as a chemical event, plane crash, or terror attack.

The recent deployment of the additional ventilators follows Phase I in 2008 which was a pilot program that sent eight ventilators to four of the state's 26 acute care hospitals. The deployment of these 80 additional ventilators and supplies will give added capacity to hospitals covering all five Emergency Medical System regions of the state. Funding for the project came from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

**THREE-DAY EXERCISE CONDUCTED IN CONCORD AREA** – A National Guard mobile laboratory and technicians in hazmat suits responded to the State House Annex in Concord after an unidentified white powder was detected in the mailroom on Oct 10. The simulated incident included the evacuation of more than 150 employees and visitors from the building. The exercise involved procedures for identifying and mitigating the toxic substance and maintaining the safety of personnel at the Annex. The second and third days of the exercise involved simulated terrorist incidents in Allenstown and Loudon.

**ALLENSTOWN CONDUCTS WILDFIRE EXERCISE** - The Town of Allenstown conducted a Wildfire Functional Exercise on Saturday, Oct. 20 at Bear Brook State Park. The focus was on the response roles of the town and the N.H. Division of Forests and Land during a large scale wildfire event. The target capabilities evaluated were: Onsite Incident Management; Critical Resources Logistics and Distribution; Emergency Public Information and Warning and EOC Management. The Allenstown EOC was activated at the Fire Station and Incident Command Post was established at the division's facility in the park.

**TESTS SHOW FISH WITH VERY LOW LEVELS OF STRONTIUM-90** – The N.H. Public Health Lab has released the results of test on fish from New Hampshire waterways for the strontium-90, which show levels of the radioactive isotope below FDA levels of concern for consumption. Samples were taken in May from 17 largemouth bass from Hermit Lake in Sanbornton. The samples include tissue from edible and non-edible parts of the fish. Additional samples of fish were taken in September from Lake Winnepesaukee (Meredith and Center Harbor), Squam Lake (Holderness), Pleasant Lake (Deerfield), Pawtuckaway Lake (Nottingham), Opechee Lake (Laconia), Northwood Lake (Northwood), the Connecticut River (Hinsdale), and the Nashua River (Nashua). A final round of testing will be conducted in May 2013.

In 2010, the State of Vermont collected and tested a fish that was caught approximately eight miles upstream from the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant. The fish was found to have a slightly elevated level of Sr-90, although the level was below the FDA safe limit for fish consumption. The recent samples were taken in an effort to determine background levels of Sr-90 in fish found in freshwater bodies in Northern New England that are not connected to the Connecticut River and therefore are not part of a water body that passes a nuclear power plant.

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